

NEW YORK TIMES

JAN 2 1933

Topics of The Times

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JAN 1 1933

RECORDS IN GULLAH HEARD BY LINGUISTS

Dialect of Coastal Negroes of South Is Presented at Yale Session.

UNIQUE STUDY DESCRIBED

Use of "Loan-Words" Told Of Before Modern Language Body—Prof. Lowes Elected.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

NEW HAVEN, Conn., Dec. 31.—Gullah, the dialect spoken by the Negroes off the coast of South Carolina, for many years an object of research by language experts, was today presented and described first "c" in "picnic" that changes by means of phonograph records to "t." People on Houston Street made on the ground, by Professor are always going out on a "pitnic." Lorenzo D. Turner of Fisk University, at the closing annual session

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There is an almost startling resemblance here to Oxford English, he was born in North Carolina, at least as we read it in this country was compelled to take an interpreter with him when he went to

Edisto Island in order to communicate with the natives.

He selected three native subjects on each of the four islands who had had a minimum of contact with the islands. Their parents for several generations had also been natives of the islands. The women selected were found to have speech less mixed with traces of the marks of outsiders than was that of the men.

Got Records by Interviews.

Dr. Turner took his records by means of interviews, aided by a comprehensive questionnaire prepared by the Linguistic Atlas Committee. He had more than 100 records, obtaining sufficient material to make a syntactical, morphological and phonological study of the dialect and to prepare an extensive vocabulary of it. About seventy-five records were made of the speech of Negroes on other islands off South Carolina.

Professor Turner explained the striking individuality in inflection, syntax, vocabulary and morphology of the Gullah tongue. Words such as "July," "hotel," "begin" and "machine" are pronounced on the first syllable. The final "d" and "t" are usually dropped. The letter "s" often replaces "th" and thus the word "earth" becomes "ut" and "three" becomes "sree." The "k" sound becomes "t" and therefore the words "nickname" and "picnic" become "nitname" and "picnit."

The Lord's Prayer as played in Gullah on a record was:

"Our Fahdah, who are een heb'n, hallowe'd be dy name, dy kingdom come, dy will be done on ut as its done een heb'n. Give us dis day our daily bread, an' fuhgive dose trespass against us. Lead us not eento temptation, but delivuh us from all ting like evil. Dine de kingdom, powuh an' dy glory—"

"Loan-Words" in Language.

Professor William F. Kamman of Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, in an address before the Modern Language Association of America, which has met concurrently at Yale this week, presented a study of settlers who spoke a foreign tongue, coming to the United States and continuing to this day to use the language of their ancestors while borrowing liberally from English.

On the subject "English Loan-Words in Low German," Professor Kamman discussed the immigrants who settled the region near Holland, Dubois County, Ind.

The settlers frequently, instead of extending the meaning of a Low German word to fit a new object, he said, chose the nearest English equivalent. Thus an ordinary American trunk was called a trunk, but the ponderous wooden trunk brought over from Germany was still called "kuffer."

"English words were employed to fit the new conditions of life such as houses and other buildings, the

American social institutions of State, school or society, farm tools vehicles, dress, dishes, the railroad and vehicles," Dr. Kamman stated. An address by Homer E. Woodbridge of Wesleyan University on "O'Neill and Melodrama" aroused several generations had also been an extended debate on the motivations of principal characters in the plays of Eugene O'Neill.

Election of Officers.

Professor John Livingston Lowes of Harvard was elected president of the Modern Language Association.

Other officers elected are Professors Albert Schinz, University of Pennsylvania, and Archer Taylor, University of Chicago, vice presidents; members of Executive Council, Professors J. S. P. Tatlock, University of California; Albert Feuillerat, Yale University; Dean Virginia Gildersleeve, Barnard College, and Professor Gilbert Chinard, Johns Hopkins University.

Professor Otto Behagel of the University of Glessen; Lucien Foullet of Paris and Professor H. J. C. Grierson of the University of Edinburgh were elected honorary members.

We're West Indian Negroes

Agitators and "Back to Africans" have been trying unsuccessfully to drive a wedge between American Negroes and those from the West Indies.

Dr. Carter Woodson, writing in the AFRO-AMERICAN last week, may have suggested one reason for this failure, namely, that virtually all of us are West Indians.

Ships from Africa, Dr. Woodson said, discharged their cargoes in the West Indies, where slaves were Europeanized before being brought to the mainland.

The so-called West Indian Negro, therefore, is one who has remained on the islands a little longer than Negroes in the United States.

CLAY EATERS
REALLY
EAT CLAY

By ALGERNON B. JACKSON, M.D.
For the Associated Negro Press

WASHINGTON.—Here is an interesting story which makes some of us ask questions and do a bit of thinking for ourselves. In the South we have been referring to the poor whites as clay eaters, but here comes an article from St. Louis which would fix the trait on Negroes. The question is, did Negroes get the habit from white or did the whites get it from Negroes? We are told by people who ought to know that a taste for carrots and spinach may be acquired

but you have to inherit a taste for clay.

To the side of a grassy hill beneath a viaduct in the heart of St. Louis a dozen or more colored persons come daily to dig out "eating clay" with their hands. They do it not because of lack of other food, but because they like the taste of the soil.

Some said the earth had a "pleasant tang" and that they prized the supply from this particular hill highly. It is the only place in the city, they explained, where the soil is smooth and not gritty.

Dr. H. A. Bulger of the medical staff of Washington University, expressed the opinion the colored diners might favor clay "because some of their ancestors used it as food in Africa."

Another possible explanation of their craving, he said, was its calcium content, which might be lacking in their diet.

One 50-year-old laborer, who stopped to eat at the hillside cafeteria, related that he had been eating clay since his childhood in Mississippi.

"It leaves a good taste in the mouth," he explained. "Whenever I can find a good hill, like this one by the railroad tracks, I scoop some clay and sample it. It's a fine dessert any time."

A colored lad of 12 said he had been eating clay ever since he could remember. His playmates often stopped their cowboy games, he said, to regale themselves with a few choice morsels of soil.

One heavy-set man, who said that section hands attracted by its gleaming red sides had been the "discoverers" of the hill, said the flavor of the clay could be rendered even more delicious by toasting it over the fire of a stove.

Negroes Are Jews?

To the Editor of the Tribune:—

Thank you for the way in which you placed the article in the TRIBUNE concerning "Are Negroes Jewish". It has stirred much interest in my paper. I hope the whole of our race who want the whole truth of ourselves as a people will investigate. We will never know it by the false names as Negroes, which were placed on us as the nations nicknamed us to destroy our identity to the world. We cannot find these false names as Negroes, as called, in ancient history. The nations of the world have even tried to destroy

all trace of them through wars and have taken them as slaves and so on and burned what records they could find in order that our identity might not be known to the world.

Now let us claim our ancestral rights as the heritage of Jacob our father. As long as we keep that word Negro attached to us we will always be counted as such Negroes. Let us consider it necessary to disrobe ourselves of all false names of degradation and return to our true name. Princes shall come out of Egypt. Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God. Psalm

68:31, Zachariah 8:13, "And it shall come to pass that as ye were a curse among the heathen O house of Judah and house of Israel so will I save you and ye shall be a blessing. Fear not but let your hands be strong. Of course Negroes were not known by the Word Negro in Jewish but our brother King Solomon says: "I am black, but emely." He did not use the word Negro for he did not know of such a word or people. Neither are we known by the word Negro as a nation. But we are known by the name of Ethiopians and are Hebrews or Jewish. There is much that can be said and proven who we are; and we are not Gentiles as some have believed.

RABBI E. J. BENSON
Monroe, N. C. Enquirer
Thursday, March 2, 1933

NEGROES GROWING LIGHTER

Negroes in America are becoming lighter in color, as a race, but a considerable range in duckiness of skin will always be found among them, says Science News Letter, a Science Service publication (Washington).

This conclusion, we are told, results from a study of assortative mating for color among negroes made by Dr. Irene Barnes Taeuber, of Mount Holyoke College, and presented before the Third International Congress of Eugenics.

Little new white blood is now entering the negro racial mixture in America, Dr. Taeuber stated. Nevertheless, the race as a whole is growing lighter, due to crossings with the lighter-colored stock already in existence. The unmixed negroes are a dwindling group; their percentage among parents at present is 23, as against only 14 per cent of pure-blooded negroes among the off-spring.

"The American negro population of the future will probably be more homogeneous as to ancestry," said Dr. Taeuber; "there will be a smaller percentage of unmixed negroes, a larger percentage with half or more negro ancestry, and a smaller percentage who pass as negroes, but have more white than negro ancestry. The segregation process operative in the inheritance of pigmentation will prevent the development of population of one uniform hue."

TULSA, OKLA. WORLD

FEB 26 1933

NEGROES HAVE OXFORD ACCENT

New York Times.

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Among the Gullahs, Doctor Turner found, the letter "s" often replaces "th," so that "three" becomes "sree." But that is what many Europeans do to the Anglo-Saxon "th." They say "ze boy" for "the boy," and they say "I sink" for "I think." Among the Gullahs, the "k" sound often becomes "t," and "picnic" becomes "pinit." On New York's east side the very same morphological law operates, only that here it is the first "c" in "picnic" that changes to "t." People on Houston street are always going out on a "pitnic."

But Gullah, as pronounced, can claim a much more distinguished kinship than the English vernacular of our newer immigrant population. Doctor Turner has brought back the Lord's Prayer on one of his phonograph disks. It sounds as follows:

"Our Fahn, who are een heb'n, hallowe'dy be dy name, dy kingdom come, dy will be done on ut as it's done een heb'n. Give us dis day our daily bread, an' fuhgive dose trespass against us. Lead us not eento temptation, but delivuh us from all ting like evil. Dine de kingdom, powuh an' dy glory"—

There is an almost startling resemblance here to Oxford English, at least as we read it in this country. The Gullah speakers say "een" heaven just as Oxford—and Boston very often—says "has bean," where most of us say "has bin." And "fuhgive" and "delivuh" exhibit the same careless, slurring liberties with the "er" and "or" sound that is the privilege of the British upper classes.

Negroes Are Not Jews

To the Editor of the Tribune:—

It is certainly strange to find Negroes ever willing to claim every nation, race or creed except their own. After reading Rabbi E. J. Benson's article on "Negroes are Jews", I am convinced of this fact. 3-23-33

It is true that we are not known as Negroes in ancient history. Going back to the original names we find the Jews called Hebrews, and the Negroes, Ethiopians or Babylonians. The name of Negro was never given to any race until they were brought to America as slaves. There is no way a Negro can trace his lineage back to Jacob. It would be interesting to know how Rabbi Benson explains the fact that the Negroes brought to Ameri-

ca no traces of Jewish learning, music or religion. And if we are Jews then who are the people we know as Jews? It's true that Solomon said, "I am black." But he gives the reason for it by saying, "For the sun hath looked upon me."

History tells us that the Hebrews were Semitic, dark. But they were not black people as were the Ethiopians or Babylonians of which we are descendants. There are in certain parts of Egypt and Africa, people who carry out many Hebrew teachings, but they do not claim to be Jews. However, we who have been intermixed for three hundred years claim to be Jews. If, as Rabbi Benson states, "We are known by the name of Ethiopians and are Hebrews or Jewish, how does he account for the fact that Jews were in Babylonian captivity, or that the Ethiopians came to fight against Hezekiah, King of Judah (Hebrews or Jews) as recorded in 2 Kings 19:9-10?

In reference to the word Gentiles we find that it is a term applied to anyone in general not a Jew.

The subject requires much study and would suggest that Rabbi Benson brush up on his ancient and Biblical history.

ARTHUR L. CAESAR
CHARLESTON, S. C.
NEWS

MAR 18 1933

Where Is the Gullah Country?

An Associated Press dispatch informs that an Edisto Island property, washed in part by the Atlantic ocean, is "in the heart of the gullah country." Is that so? Negro Edistonians of a vanishing time spoke a distinct "gullah." So did negroes of the Savannah river, Combahee river, Cooper river, Santee river rice and cotton plantations. Would the "gullah" of the Combahee be fully understood by a user of the "gullah" of the Santee? Did not each "gullah" section have its own "heart"? Everybody should know nowadays "gullah" is taboo among the schooled negroes. They are ashamed of it. Many of the sons and daughters of "gullah" negroes talk English with care. "Gullah" belongs to days now gone.

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The Georgia Cracker

By BASCOM ANTHONY

The term "Georgia Cracker" is loosely applied to all Georgians, but in its true meaning, it originally applied to the poor whites of native stock who were small home owners or in the employ of the rich slave owners. In this latter sense I use it, and by it I mean not all our poor, but only those who have descended from the original settlers in our mountain sections and in the "pine barrens" of Georgia. He is an interesting character. In his veins, in common with our southern mountaineers, flows about the purest Anglo-Saxon blood on this continent, and in his speech survives more ancient words and terms than can be found elsewhere in America. All his blood lines and traditions are from northern Europe, and he usually has a lot from each of them—especially his nose. There are more pounds of nose among his people according to the number of noses than can be found elsewhere outside of a Jewish synagogue. You won't realize this until you return from a trip north or from southern Europe, where noses are quite modest and retiring, then you will begin to understand what the wire-grass cracker meant when he said of his neighbor "when it comes to root hog or die poor, that fellow will fetch the yaller dirt every time."

I think I know him. I have slept in his cabin a thousand times and have enjoyed his hospitality all my days. I have laughed at his quaint sayings and found in him a sort of "bre'r rabbit" humor that is all his own.

Has Natural Ability

An intelligent northern business man, who has for many years had large interests south and who has spent most of his time here, said: "The Georgia Cracker is the only man on earth who can in a single generation rise from the bottom to the top." Perhaps he made too broad a generalization, but the statement is true of many Crackers. He has in him a native ability to measure up to the demands.

I have long been interested in our cotton mill people and have tried to be of some service to them. The labor there in other days came from the poorest and most unfortunate part of our people. It was once the only place where ignorant women and children could find work by which to support themselves and their aged or helpless dependents. When I found a simlin headed person among them, whose head ran back like a Negro's heel, until a dozen generations of careful breeding wouldn't help him much, I knew he was not a Cracker but a drift-in from elsewhere. A dozen generations of poverty, ignorance, hard-

ship and inherited disease with hook-worm and malnutrition included, had not taken away from the Cracker a well shaped head and a prominent nose.

A year or so ago I was talking to one of the leading educators of the state who was brought up, educated and who had taught elsewhere for some years, and he said to me, "I find in these Georgia boys an ability, a subtle something that sets them apart that I have not found elsewhere." The man who said that is a thoughtful, conservative, quiet person not given to extravagant statements.

Unexplained Gap

I believe all this, but how to reconcile it with the fact that we are one of the most backward states in the union, rank high in ignorance and pull some of the craziest political stunts thinkable, is beyond me. Maybe a partial explanation is found in some of the Georgia cracker's chief characteristics.

I never saw a simon pure cracker in my life, no matter how poor or ignorant, who ever gave any token of a sense of inferiority. He always seems to think that he is as good as anybody if not a little mite better. He sometimes has a measure of resentment against "them durned town tarrapins that carry all they've got on their backs," and seems to think that these same tarrapins through connivance with Wall Street have somehow swindled him out of the proceeds of his crop. This attitude of mind in connection with his deep feeling that he is "a free born American citizen" makes him rather an easy dupe for shrewd politicians.

I know of a judge who now pre-sides in one of our superior courts in his desire to "save his face," who won the office against his opponent by staying out of the townseven if there is an element of humbugery in it, for when a man loses his self-respect in losing his self-reliance, he is in the same class with a woman who has parted with her virtue. Every man has a con-tempt for himself at times because of the gap between his ideals and his performances. His only relief on the spiritual side is the cry of "God be merciful to me a sinner" and when the human side to force the respect from others that he can not grant unto himself. May he succeed in both, until delivered from his veil of flesh and cloud of ignorance, he shall come to the land of pure spirit where desire is transmuted into attainment and the will of God and man are one.

Sentiment Controls

Why need we wonder at him being controlled by prejudice and sentiment rather than by reason when we all know that there hasn't been a campaign in the South in the last 70 years conducted upon any other basis. No matter what the issue may be, or the interests involved when it comes right down to the pinch, politicians, papers, pulpit and all are largely controlled by that old moth eaten and time smitten scarecrow of the "dam Yankee and the Negro," when all of us with brains enough to hold a bag or turn a grind stone know there is nothing to it.

When Woodrow Wilson was elected

president a large part of Georgia did then exactly what it is doing now—made a rush for the political feed trough at Washington and tried to get Mr. Bryan to back them in their efforts. He plainly told a delegation of our politicians that there was no chance for them, because Georgia was recognized as the most backward state in the Union, even more so than Utah. As Mr. Wilson was a progressive where Mr. Roosevelt is as conservative as Mr. Hoover, our politicians may fare better this time.

His Worst Enemies

I shall not censure the Georgia cracker for his backwardness, because all his days have been spent among two of the worst enemies to progress known to humanity—prejudice and sentimentalism. How can he help being prejudiced when his political leaders think with their bile ducts and reach their highest peaks of eloquence about things that have been dead for 50 years? His religious teachers are less prejudiced now than formerly, but most of them are as full of sentimentalism as ever. A soft hearted sentimental person, through the kindness of his heart, does as much harm as he would if he were soft-headed. His sympathies are as misleading and hurtful as a politician's prejudice. Both act independently of brains. To both these influences the cracker has been subjected all his days.

His chief charm to me is his sturdy independence and self-reliance. The genuine cracker is not apt to be found in the bread lines nor where the Red Cross flour is rationed. He is too independent for that. He will decline a place at your table with the statement that he isn't hungry when he is half-starved. He wants no bonus so long as he has a leg upon which to stand. A Chinaman can't excel him in his desire to "save his face."

May he and his children keep it up even if there is an element of humbugery in it, for when a man loses his self-respect in losing his self-reliance, he is in the same class with a woman who has parted with her virtue. Every man has a contempt for himself at times because of the gap between his ideals and his performances. His only relief on the spiritual side is the cry of "God be merciful to me a sinner" and when the human side to force the respect from others that he can not grant unto himself. May he succeed in both, until delivered from his veil of flesh and cloud of ignorance, he shall come to the land of pure spirit where desire is transmuted into attainment and the will of God and man are one.

WELLSVILLE, N. Y.

REPORTER

APR 27 1933

HIGHBROWS DEBUNKED.

The terms "highbrow" and "low-brow" are based on error. So says Dr. Ales Hrdlicka, anthropologist of the Smithsonian Institution, one of the world's most distinguished skull scholars. After measuring and comparing thousands of skulls of many races, modern, ancient and prehistoric, he reports that there is no intellectual difference between the fellow with a high forehead and the fellow with a low one. He found bulging fronts about equally among white Americans of our best and oldest stock, native Indians, American Negroes and Eskimos. He found that his colleagues of the American Academy of Sciences had almost exactly the same kind of forehead as our backward Tennessee highlanders and immigrants of 16 nationalities at Ellis Island.

This result is puzzling when you look at portraits of great philosophers. Their foreheads are usually high, particularly those of Plato and Lord Bacon. But maybe the painters have exaggerated the height in such cases, under the influence of this old tradition. Anyway, don't despair of our child if he hasn't a domelike forehead. Some of the biggest foreheads belong to morons.

SCIENCE AND RACE.

When the University of Oxford thought that EUCLID was the sum and substance of higher mathematics and still looked upon bathing as a heathen custom, Moorish scientists were both bathing and laying the foundation of modern culture. "They are of a cold temperament and never reach maturity," said the learned SAID of Toledo, speaking of the Nordic barbarians. "They are of a great stature and of a white color. But they lack all sharpness of wit and penetration of intellect." No doubt he and his contemporaries of Sevilla and Córdoba, who were developing spherical trigonometry, would be amazed to see what has become of their own people and of the despised northmen. The Moors were in their prime when they were freely intermarry-

ing with conquered infidels, and declined when the day of conquest and emigration was over. Such vicissitudes cause wonder about the rôle of race in human progress.

Ask an anthropologist to define a race and he gives us a muddled mixture of physical characteristics, genetics, folkways and geographical origins. Ask the geneticist and he is apt to talk in terms of a biological species—something especially difficult to determine in the case of such a mongrel as the Aryan beloved of the Nazis. Ask the politician and he advances theories which, he mistakenly believes, have the sanction of both physical anthropology and genetics. No one is able exactly to tell us what a race is. White, black, yellow? Flat nose and high nose, thick lips and thin lips? Squateness and tallness? These are not conclusive. Despite the obvious differences between Asiatics and Europeans, Africans and Eskimos, we find everywhere gradations not due to racial mixtures. Many a pure-blooded Mongol has decided European traits; many a pure European looks as if his grandfather had been a Japanese.

The biochemist attacks the problem with blood agglutination tests. Blood will tell—but not everything. He discovers evidence of a single pure strain long ago. Nowhere is it to be found today—not even in savage tribes. Turn to the geneticist. Drs. DAVENPORT and STEGGARADA of the Carnegie Institution of Washington have studied the whites and blacks of Jamaica, where all live in the same environment. Small differences in favor of the whites were detected—not enough, in the opinion of Professor HOGBEN, to justify the setting up of legislative policies and social barriers. Corresponding studies made in South Africa indicate that the children of Hottentots and Boers are superior to their parents.

The psychologists are no clearer. When Professor BRIGHAM was engaged in assessing the intelligence quotient of children of different racial stocks on the basis of American Army tests, one professional enthusiast predicted that the final result would be sufficient "to convince the most pronounced skeptic of Nordic superiority. It

A SMILE AND A SONG

By DENNIS A. BETHEA, M. D.

Te Negro is depicted in literature as the man with a smile and a song. He is always supposed to be in good humor and ready to laugh or sing you a song, on the slightest provocation. Right recently that great writer, Arthur Brisbane, commended him for this characteristic, and deplored the fact that such a good disposition should be housed within a black skin.

However, there are some of our own people who do not take this view. In fact they feel that we are carrying this smiling and singing too far. They say we should get down to serious thinking about our condition. They are of the opinion our smile and song are to blame for our failures. Now, in our frantic effort to find out the cause of our predicament, we are likely to place the blame any old place. I know one well known writer who even goes so far as to put the blame on the church. I have a friend who is firmly convinced that the cause of his complete failure in life is his wife.

There is an old saying that "experience is the best teacher." Now this colored race has been through some tough situations, and it has learned that "molasses causes more flies than vinegar." Experience has taught just because an individual is able to look on the bright side of a subject, and just because he can sing at his work, this does not mean that he is a happy-go-lucky sort of a fellow by any means. Oftentimes a person will smile for a smoke screen to hide his despair, and sing a song as a balm for excruciating pain.

In his book, "What the Negro Thinks," Dr. Moton sums it up in this terse paragraph: "For beneath the smile and back of the song, the Negro does take his situation seriously, in spite of opinions to the contrary. For all his mirth there is just a little melancholy in his smile; and all his song has a haunting strain of sadness in it. Catch him off his guard and you will find him neither smiling nor singing, but thinking and thinking hard. At one time in his career, when the Negro brooded over his wrongs, he either sullen or cried. Out of these depths came the 'spirituals' or sorrow songs of the race. He was a slave then and there was little he could do but suffer and hope. Today when the Negro meditates on the injustices that he meets from time to time, he often gets 'mad.' As before he may reserve his demonstration for the 'big' gate, but the protest is none the less genuine for all that; and pressed too far, his wrath will explode on

the spot, and at such times, those who know him have the wisdom to let him alone."

BOSTON, MASS. NEW YORK TIMES
HERALD

FEB 22 1933
Our Mail Bag

JUL 23 1933
WHENCE OUR NEGROES?

An Example in Manners

From Negroes to Whites

To the Editor of The Herald:

It is creditable to anybody, in this period of depression, to retain a cheerful look and a sunny soul. When a whole class which has been hard hit refuses to show any outward signs of discouragement, and seems really to be more hopeful than ever, surely the members of that group are entitled to special credit.

I refer, Sir, to the Negroes, who carry handbags in the railroad stations. Their business has not been good. Even when prosperity had not gone around the corner, their earnings were not large. These men have to put up with those little human weaknesses which get on the nerves of most persons. Nevertheless, these Negro "caps" act just the same, smile just as frequently, render their services with as much good spirit and helpfulness as ever before.

How often are they guilty of misdeeds or even of discourtesy toward the public? How often do they make mistakes? How often have they misappropriated or even misplaced property?

I have been travelling all over the United States for many years, and have given these colored men thousands of assignments. Never have they blundered on one. I have never missed a train or even received misinformation from them. I have hardly ever found one who was sulky. That is the reason why I regard a liberal tip to them as well bestowed. I know of no better way to show appreciation of honest and cheery endeavor under adverse conditions.

There is another class, too, which should have the grateful attention of the public at this time. I refer to the porters on Pullman cars and the waiters. Their earnings from tips have fallen off sharply, both because there is less travel than formerly and because folks do not tip so liberally or so often as in the happier days. But have you noticed any change in the attitude of those Negroes of the railroads? And how often have those of you who use the trains a great deal been disappointed by these men in either the large or the small things?

I have often wondered, and in the last year or two I have done so more frequently than ever before, whether the black race is not displaying better manners and less defeatism than the Caucasians.

L. P. WARE.
Boston, Feb. 20.

Slave traders and plantation owners cared little whether their slaves came from this part of Africa or that. But Dr. Melville Herskovits (Northwestern University) cared so much that he found out what he could from old men still living in Africa and from customs that have survived.

The evidence all points to the Gold Coast, Dahomey, Togoland, Nigeria—in a word, the West Coast of Africa. No doubt some of the more energetic traders went further inland, but it stands to reason that neither time nor effort would be lost in penetrating too far into the jungle.

It is strange how West African customs have survived among American Negroes to this very day. "Negroes in the United States are Christians," Dr. Herskovits says, "yet their dead must 'cross the River Jordan' in a manner exactly parallel to that which West African dead must cross their rivers before they reach the spirit world. We find the African importance of wakes for the dead, and we observe an entire complex of ritual surrounding burial so akin to the West African funeral customs, even to burying shallow, until arrangements can be made for a proper funeral, the passing of small children over the coffin as they do in the Suriname bush, and the inclusion of food and money in the coffins."

Dr. Herskovits disputes the theory that the Southern Negro drawl and syntax are derived from Elizabethan English. "Any grammar of a West African people explains the grammatical oddities."

A.—The Portuguese people exhibit many racial traits. The earliest Portuguese people are the Iberians. The remnants of Portugal are related to the Asturian Spaniards. Jewish and Arabic blood is found in the central districts and African in the south.

BELLEVILLE, ILL.
NEWS DEMOCRAT

APR 1 1933

America's Kinliest Race

(By Archibald Rutledge)

In downright kindness and mercy to one another Negroes surely surpass all other races in America. I am thinking of them as I have always known them in their joyous primitive state in the deep rural South of today. My observations of their ready compassion toward members of their own race have extended over a period of nearly 50 years, since boyhood days in the lonely hinterlands beyond Charleston.

On the borders of my plantation is a village of some 60 Negroes. But for the little medicine I dole out, these humble people, from birth until death, have no care from a physician. If one is injured or taken sick, he immediately becomes the care and the concern of the whole community. That the assistance is rarely effective in no way impairs the beauty of the compassion. Sympathy is the great prescription all of them use. And I can testify that any trouble which comes to any member of a Negro community never fails to produce an outpouring of sympathy and help that is the very flowering of the human spirit.

Sue, my cook, came late to breakfast. "You see, Cap'n," she explained, "I was sittin' up all night with Sister Anne." Sister Anne had typhoid.

Negroes make it a point never to leave a sick friend solitary. Perhaps no other people realize so clearly that life, with its varied joys and griefs, is distinctly a *mutual* thing. In the more remote rural districts, smallpox is not uncommon among them. While none of them are ever vaccinated against this plague, they are fully aware of its dread character. Yet I have never known an afflicted patient to lack volunteer nurses, both men and women. Their disregard of danger is not due to ignorance, but rather to the noble

positive virtue of self-sacrifice.

While it is not my purpose to draw any invidious comparisons between the relations of whites among themselves and Negroes among themselves, I believe the Negro's philosophy of life makes "the milk of human kindness" a more natural product of his heart than it is of ours. For example, among the Negroes of whom I write, rivalry is practically unknown. On the contrary there is a sense of mutual dependence, of fellowship, that directs them not so much to share their worldly possessions—of which they have pitifully few—as to share their hearts, and to spend their spirits for one another. Their constant use of the words "brother" and "sister" connotes a conscious racial rather than family relationship.

Negroes are ready in defence of members of their own race. This defence may be unscrupulous, but its motive is generous.

One day I saw a white man approach a group of Negroes to whom he was a stranger.

"Is Moses Jones here?" he asked.

"No, sah! No, sah!" came the ready chorus, dreading in the presence of the unknown visitor the personification of the ever-dreaded Law.

"I am sorry he isn't here," the stranger said; "I have some money for him."

"Here is Moses! Here is Moses!" came the equally ready chorus.

And their initial deception did not embarrass or trouble them. They had been shielding a friend. They chuckled like children over their kindly dissimulation.

One day my Negro comrade, Prince Alston, and I were being ferried across a river by old William Le-gree. "I had a heavy trouble last night," William announced. He told us his house had been burned, and all his possessions. Prince fumbled in his ragged clothes. At last he produced a nickel—the sum of his capital. "Here, Cousin William," he said gravely, "is a little help for you to build a new house."

I remember saying to Flora Colleton: "Here are I asked Sue how she managed to keep on. "At first some extra apples and bags of candy, Flora, left over I was weary," she said; "but I saw her suffer. Then from last night's party. Take them home so that I took her into my heart. After that, I minded nothing. your children can have a plenty."

And she said:

"I will take them; but there are some little mother- of the American Negro, much has been said of his less children who could not be here last night. I will racial inferiority, much of his possibilities, especially take these presents to them."

Decisions of this kind seem always to be made, not this very differentness that makes him an original with any show of conscious self-righteousness, but and vital human being.

naturally and spontaneously.

The more I know the Negro, the more am I im- Not long ago, Sue Alston, the wife of Prince, was pressed with his spiritual sagacity. We who are sup- telling me about a patient she had nursed. The pa-posed to be thrifty and industrious are wont to lament tient was old, her trouble incurable. There were his love of ease, his readiness to relax, his manner of sleepless nights; toilsome hours of weary watching, taking nothing too seriously. But these are evidences

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Decisions of this kind seem always to be made, not with any show of conscious self-righteousness, but naturally and spontaneously.

The more I know the Negro, the more am I impressed with his spiritual sagacity. We who are supposed to be thrifty and industrious are wont to lament his love of ease, his readiness to relax, his manner of taking nothing too seriously. But these are evidences

of his philosophy. To the Negro the end of existence is not the accumulation of wealth but the enjoyment of life. The Epicurean said, "Eat, drink, and be merry; for tomorrow we die." The Negro says, "Eat drink and be merry." As for dying, his faith in an after-life is so complete that it illuminates for him even the Valley of the Shadow. His religion is effective, not because it keeps him from what we term *sin*, but because it reconciles him to the twin enigmas of life and death. He takes the shocks of existence as he takes the storm, the rain, the cold. Gentle acceptance of the myriad chances of life, a rich spiritual background, a cheerful facing of the future—these are parts of the Negro's philosophy.

Whether by choice or accident, the Negro has more closely followed than have many of us the Master's injunction about caring little for the accumulation of things material. I should not attribute his failure to be enamored of money-getting to laziness, but rather to a doubt as to the worth of it all. He prefers to be rather than to achieve. He knows that life is all we have; and that there are other ways of enjoying it than by incessant toil and pursuing the mirage of wealth. I have known many a Negro who was a superb success merely in manifesting the triumph of the spirit by good manners, kind words and thoughts, patience, fortitude.

The tourist driving through the rural South is always amazed to see at crossroads, at railroad stations, or beside stores groups of Negroes who are apparently doing nothing. But those Negroes are just living; they are talking, laughing, teasing one another, getting enjoyment out of life.

After years of ceaseless labor and self-denial, some business men retire and begin to look about at life and wonder what it is for. They are fortunate if they have not lost capacity for enjoyment. They complain that their friends have little time for them. But the Negro, never actually having been in business, is always retired from it. Consequently he never lacks abundant company among his kind. He keeps in the full current of life.

Accepting it from childhood as fruit to be enjoyed, he does not hoard, has no plans for the future, accepts

each new day as a thing in itself rather than as a preliminary of something greater. Despite the material hardships of his situation, he gets out of life more satisfaction than the white man. He drifts amiably; he "loafs and invites his soul."

For, to his credit, the Negro has somehow solved the rather arduous problem of living without working. One day I saw a Negro boy of 18 sitting on a woodpile. "James," I asked, "what do you do for a living?"

"Nothin'," he answered calmly.

"Who supports you?"

"Pa. He takes care of me and my four brudders and three sisters."

"And what does your father do?"

"Nothin'."

There appears to be genius in such an achievement.

The untutored Negro has a just pride—the subdued pride of the humble—the pride of one who has come to a certain mastery of life. His calm pride is that of one who is not in endless agitation of spirit—a condition that he sees among many not of his own race, who are supposed to be superior to him.

I once overheard a remark that goes to the heart of this. Two Negroes were overheard talking about a white man who had just left them.

"He was so nice" one said, "that he might have been one of us."

If such an observation casts any reflection on the white race, the effect is the effect of truth.

Negroes have delicate perceptions; they know the virtue of reticence; their feet may trudge, but their souls are winged. While educators are concerning

themselves with the mental advancement of the Negro, and while I too am interested in this achievement, it impresses me less than the Negro's spiritual value as manifested in his kindness. It breathes in his songs; it touches with tender radiance the shadows of his lowly life.

HOW TO KEEP WELL

By Dr. W. A. Evans

THE POISE OF THE NEGRO.

A man had occasion to go down a alley in order to reach the loading platform of an express company. The place was a large city and the time late spring. Near the express platform was the rear door of a large restaurant, and not far from the door was the outlet of a ventilating duct leading from the kitchen of the restaurant.

This man noticed about a dozen negroes keeping warm by standing before the outlet of the ventilating fan. However, they were not dependent on kitchen odors for food. This they obtained by raiding garbage cans. Before them was piled an accumulation of second hand food.

A beer wagon went down the alley collecting empty kegs. The driver called: "There is a lot of beer in a few of these kegs. Get a can and come for it."

One of the number rustled a five-gallon empty can, hastily and superficially washed it, and went for the supply while his associates scattered to look for something to drink from. Presently the boys were back at their supply of second hand foods and second hand beer, as happy and as carefree as birds of the air.

The negro practically never commits suicide. He has always seemed quite immune to insanity, although in recent years he is losing ground in that particular. There are those who think the negro has a better philosophy than the white man, and that is the reason he has less insanity and is less given to suicide.

The same claim has been made for the philosophy and the religions of the far east. These eastern peoples also have less insanity and less emotional disturbance.

Archibald Rutledge, whose name implies practical knowledge of the subject, writes:

"The more I know the negro the more I am impressed with his spiritual sagacity. To him the end of existence is not the accumulation of wealth; it is enjoyment of life. He takes the shocks of existence as he takes the storm, the rain, the cold. He prefers to be rather than to achieve. He knows there are other ways of enjoying life than by incessant toil and pursuing the mirage of wealth. Despite the material hardships of his situation he gets out of life more satisfaction than the white man. His religion is effective, not because it keeps him from what we term sin, but because it reconciles him to the twin enigmas of life and death. On the contrary, after years of ceaseless labor and self-denial some (white) business men retire and begin to look about at life and wonder what it is for."

Mr. Rutledge's statements about business men can be broadened to

include white men and women in from infancy onward in poise and many fields. Ambition and rivalry equanimity. have their values, but they do lead to unhappiness and often to mental disturbance. There are some advantages in thrills and over-emotionalism, but the disadvantages often outweigh them. Their products are often disastrous.

There is nothing the white man needs more than he does training

Negro Life Lends Color To Drab American Civilization

By J. A. ROGERS

Recently a New York daily by way of boosting winter tours to the West Indies carried a picture of a number of black boys of Kingston, Jamaica, grinning in a row and an old black peasant woman smoking a long pipe, with the title: "Where Laziness Reigns." Some friends of mine from that island became highly indignant and were for writing to the editor, protesting that the types shown were not characteristic of the country, and inquiring why something of a better side of Jamaican life was not shown.

It was not shown for the simple reason that tourists wish to see something different when they travel, and the more different it is, the better. Moreover, the islanders are colored and to have shown some of the highly-cultured, light-colored folks there, instead of the "pure" Negro type peasantry would have been an advertisement with a reverse pull.

The same is essentially true of the United States. The peasant Negro is vastly more interesting to the whites than a Negro graduate of Yale or Harvard. Most of the books, or reference to Negroes in books and magazines are about this kind of Negro. Indeed, the literary output on the peasant Negro has been enormous, and the public seems never to have enough of it.

Negro Lends Color

It is inevitable that the Negro be written about. American life is extraordinarily flat and monotonous. A vast white desert, judging from the literary and the dramatic output on it. The Negro adds color, physically and spiritually, to this life. He laughs, sings, jigs, makes music, and is content with the promise of eating pie in the sky by and by. Besides, he is ostracized and booted, the knowledge of which helps immensely to make the white brother contented with his own lot. Nothing so helps to give some folks a sense of well-being as to learn that others are in trouble. As Mr. Dooley used to say so neatly that the height of comfort to him was to sit in the shade sipping iced lemonade and watch Italian laborers breaking rocks in the scorching sun. In short, the Negro exercises a great fascination on the white man. When one touches on the mat-

ter of sex this fascination is multiplied. In the good old days the Southern aristocrats used to meet the slave-ships eagerly at the pier to see what new in the line of black Venuses had arrived. Poems were written about them and there have an old picture showing a black Venus benignly escorted from West Africa by a white Neptune and white Cupids. Hence, a film as "The Emperor Jones" or one of the many "darkies" clowning in a picture helps to relieve the boredom of the white brother, fed up with himself and his civilization. I recall once hearing a famous white writer exclaim to a friend: "I'm fed up with this G-d-d Anglo-Saxon whiteness." And there are many others like him.

Wants Negro Crude

As long as this monotony exists in white civilization the Negro is going to be featured on that side of his life which he is least proud. And if ever the Negro were to become a paragon tomorrow it wouldn't make any difference. The traditional Negro would live on, for tradition is stronger than reality. Above all the traditional Negro has a market value in the great field of amusement while the Negro, as he actually is, is not worth a picayune to white promoters. And most likely to Negro audiences too.

Since the whites as I said, are interested most in the humbler and the seamier side of Negro life, I forecast that we are going to have more of that and in progressively stronger doses. There is, for instance, the latest book on the Negro: "Kingdom Coming", by Roark Bradford. I have not read this book, and do not need to, as I know Bradford's writings well. I have merely seen the review of it, and it sounds so much like Bradford's sensationalism that I quote a part of it, feeling sure that I am not doing him an injustice.

Speaking of the period just before the emancipation:

"Tragedies were inevitable and an incident which occurred in Louisiana during the Civil War, showed how pitifully unfitted for freedom some of them (the Negroes) were. In one of the up-river parishes word went out that any Negroes who wished to go to New Orleans would be taken aboard a vessel carrying Northern troops coming down the river on a certain day. Young Ne-

gro wench, drunk with the heady idea of freedom, gathered in an excited mob at the landing, many with nursing children in their arms. When the boat arrived an officer announced that only women without babies could go. Some days later a huge mound of cotton, which had lain long near this landing awaiting shipment was moved and the little black corpses of pickaninnies pushed between bales by their mothers and left to die, fell out like rain."

Mysterious Story

Far be it from me to call Mr. Bradford a liar with a short and ugly word added. Rather we are indebted to him for the discovery of two brand-new Negro characteristics. First that Negro babies do not cry, and second that they do not smell after they have lain dead for days in a hot climate. There were enough babies thrust behind those, we suppose, tightly packed bales of cotton to have made a squalling that reached to New Orleans, and yet those well-behaved lambs just lay there for days and died without uttering a bleat. Well, if you cannot swallow that just imagine that all the people about the landing, both immediately before and after the sailing of the boat were all deaf.

WHEN A WHITE MAN GETS WORRIED

Arthur Brisbane says that when a white man gets worried about money or domestic affairs he kills himself, but when a black man gets worried about the same things he takes a nap. That is one difference between the races that we need not attempt to alter. While the suicide rate among members of the Race is higher now than ever before, according to some recent statistics released by an insurance company, it is also true that this rate has not increased in proportion to the increase in suicides among whites. Sometimes we wonder whether it is worry or just a general weakening of the brain that drives so many white people to kill themselves. But whatever it is, if Mr. Brisbane is correct in his statement, we are like white people in about as many ways as we ought to be without adding the suicide mania to our characteristics.

If we have progressed to the state where we can sleep off our worries, we are doing pretty well and should let that suffice. After all, jumping off the Wrigley building or the Empire State building never solved any prob-

lems, and quite often create new ones for the building superintendents, the porters and those we leave behind us. Let's keep on "sleeping it off."